



Safety Alert

Stay Out of Abandoned Mines

Abandoned and inactive mines exist in every state. There are approximately 17,000 abandoned underground mines and 56,000 abandoned surface mines nationwide. These mines contain hidden, often lethal hazards such as vertical shafts, unstable ground and highwalls, bad air (oxygen deficiency/toxic gases), flooded workings, old explosives, decaying timbers, loose rock, and sudden subsidence.



Best Practices

- **Do not enter** any mine opening, shaft, or fenced/posted area. Treat every opening as deadly.
- **Never swim or dive** in quarries or pit lakes; depth entanglement, and cold-water shock kill even strong swimmers.
- **No urban exploration, drones, or rope descents** into mines – recreational gear does not mitigate toxic air, collapses, or hidden shafts.
- **Report hazards** such as unsecured openings, missing signs, and exposed openings to land managers such as Bureau of Land Management office, state Abandoned Mine Lands, or property owner.
- **Stay on marked trails** in parks and public lands; obey closures and warning signs. Entering sealed or posted mine structures is trespassing.

Report accidents and hazardous conditions: 1-800-746-1553

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